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Transatlantic Clausewitz

Dr John E. Tashjean



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States are taught not by argument but by events.

Charles de Gaulle

Clausewitz, like Hegel, fell victim to the Polish cholera of 1831. Yet he remained alive intellectually: his presence, at first peripheral and distorted, gradually grew more significant and universal. The Prussian victories of the nineteenth century, like the German disasters of the twentieth, stimulated interest in him. Leftists of different countries and different hues, including Koerner, Lenin and Mao, took him seriously. In the fifties, the problematic relation of nuclear weapons to rational statecraft made him a controversial symbol and the object of Professor Aron's protracted study now nearing appearance in two volumes in English. In 1966 Professor Hahlweg edited in masterly fashion the first of two volumes of Clausewitz papers, containing primarily lectures on guerrilla warfare given at the *Kriegsakademie* in 1810 and 1811.¹ The second volume, expected in 1982, contains early philosophical texts. The 1980 bicentennial of the birth of Clausewitz occasioned various editions, symposia and commentary new and reprinted. America's Korean and Vietnamese wars have made him a major reference point in continuing controversies and postmortems about strategy. 4

No comprehensive and definitive history of his presence and influence has been attempted, though segments of the story have certainly been told.² The last thirty years have brought the utter novelty of a genuinely "transatlantic" Clausewitz and justify the present assessment.

Our thesis is simple: in retrospect from 1982 to 1952, there is an unmistakable and enormous progress in our understanding of Clausewitz. In substantiation of this view, we discuss the most important Clausewitzian studies so as to see them against their strategic background and to highlight selected features of current interest.

I

In 1952 there burst upon the world of scholarship a substantially new Clausewitz thanks to Professor Hahlweg's sixteenth edition of

¹Carl von Clausewitz - Schriften - Aufsätze - Studien-Briefe, ed. Werner Hahlweg (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1966), vol. I, pp. 226-599.

²The most complete overview is found in the two long essays by Hahlweg in the nineteenth or jubilee edition of *Vom Kriege* (1980). This overview is bibliographical

Vom Kriege. In the best traditions of scholarship this tome of a thousand pages restored the original text on the crucial issue of civil-military relations in high command. Why did the text need to be restored? Starting with the second edition of 1853, Hahlweg showed,

the military editors "modified" the text so that war appeared not only as the continuation [of politics] "with the admixture" of other means, but as a complete replacement of politics....The first Moltke of 1866 and 1870-71 fame actually said that the military forces worked best if undisturbed by politicians whose time came only when the military action was ended. Aron refers to this simplistic attitude (vol. I, 21) and refrains from expressly quoting Bismarck's opposite opinion, which he regards as well known. This is certainly justified, but for readers outside Europe I think it is worthwhile quoting his actual words of 1870, the more so since Bismarck had never studied Clausewitz.

In his *Erinnerung und Gedanke* [sic], vol. 2, Bismarck tells in the chapter "Nikolsburg" of the desperate efforts of the *Generalstab* in the 1866 war to exclude him from all strategic discussions during the war. Of course they did not succeed. But nevertheless the "*Halbgoetter*" [demigods] of the military command tried again in 1870 under the slogan: No repetition of the shame of Nikolsburg. In chapter 23 ("Versailles") Bismarck writes in his terse and clear style the following:

Perhaps one could condense the theory of the *Generalstab*, which also underlies their military teaching, into the following words: the minister of foreign affairs is only given the word [sic - meaning: given the floor - J.E.T.] again when the High Command thinks the time has come to close the temple of Janus. But the double face of Janus contains already the warning that the government of a state at war has also to look in another direction than that of the theater of war. The task of the Army Command is the annihilation of the enemy forces. But the aim of the war is to fight for a peace with conditions

rather than analytical. See, especially, Clemente Ancona, "Der Einfluss Clausewitz' 'Vom Kriege' auf das marxistische Denken von Marx bis Lenin," in: Guenter Dill, ed., *Clausewitz in Perspektive* (Frankfurt a.M.: Ullstein, 1980), pp. 560-591 (hereinafter cited as Dill); Aron's *Penser la guerre, Clausewitz* (Paris: Gallimard, 1976); Bernard Brodie, "In Quest of the Unknown Clausewitz," *International Security*, I (Winter 1977): pp. 62-69; Friedrich Doepner, "Clausewitz gestern und heute. II," *Europaeische Wehrkunde*, vol. XXVI (December 1977), pp. 622-627; F. Doepner, "Clausewitz gestern und heute. III," *Europaeische Wehrkunde*, Vol. XXVII (January 1978), pp. 28-30; the chapters by Asano, Hahlweg, Rehm, and from the Soviet military encyclopedia in: Clausewitzgesellschaft, ed., *Freiheit ohne Krieg?* (Bonn: Duemmler, 1980), pp. 349-394; Michael Howard's "Influence of Clausewitz" in the Howard-Paret edition of *On War* (1976), pp. 27-44; Ulrich Marwedel, *Carl von Clausewitz. Persoenlichkeit und Wirkungsgeschichte seines Werkes bis 1918* (Boppard am Rhein: Harald Boldt, 1978); Jehuda L. Wallach, *Das Dogma der Vernichtungsschlacht. Die Lehren von Clausewitz und Schlieffen und ihre Wirkungen in zwei Weltkriegen* (Frankfurt a.M.: Bernard & Graefe, 1967); Barton Whaley, "Deception - Its Decline and Revival in International Conflict," in: Harold Lasswell et al., eds., *Propaganda and Communication in World History* (University of Hawaii Press, 1980). vol. II, pp. 339-376.

which are in tune with the policy pursued by the State (my translation [i.e., E. Rosenbaum]).

These sentences of Bismarck show in an exemplary way the root of the dialectic tension which characterizes the work *Vom Kriege*. The task of war, if it is not waged for complete conquest, is to disarm the enemy but to leave him in a state able to sign and to keep a treaty of peace.¹

In criticism of this useful passage it must be pointed out that its author, relying on the 1952 edition, overlooks a directly relevant Clausewitzian memorandum quoted in Hahlweg's introduction to the edition of 1973 and to be included in Hahlweg's forthcoming second volume of the Clausewitz papers. Hahlweg states that this memorandum was written by Clausewitz after 1815 and is entitled "Deutsche Militaer Verfassung," i.e., the military constitution of Germany. "It is a prejudice," Clausewitz writes, "to believe that military operations cannot be conducted well by the cabinet of a government; the [French] revolutionary war has certainly shown that they can; a cabinet which stays close to the armies in the field is even more effective."²

The restoration of the original text of *Vom Kriege* was the chief, though not the only, accomplishment of this landmark edition. Hahlweg also supplied voluminous and enlightening annotation on terminological, technical, biographical, and historical points. Furthermore, he cited a mountain of commentary on Clausewitz to show the many changes in the interpretation of *On War* taking place around the world in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In a word, the contemporary study of Clausewitz is best dated, and largely derives from, the edition of 1952. It underlies, together with the first edition of 1832, the now standard English-language edition by Professors Howard and Paret.

As the Straits of Dover are, in some intellectual respects, wider than the Atlantic, it was not to be expected that Hahlweg's landmark edition would be promptly translated into English and absorbed by readers academic and official. The progress of Minerva was rather more circuitous. The late Messrs. Lin Piao, MacArthur and Truman deserve in their dialectical ways much of

¹Eduard Rosenbaum reviewing Aron's *Penser la guerre in History and Theory*, vol. XVII (1978), p. 238.

²Author's translation of: "C'est un préjugé que de croire que les opérations militaires ne puissent être bien conduites par le cabinet d'un gouvernement; la guerre de la révolution nous l'a bien montré; un cabinet, qui suit les armées de près, en est encore plus capable." Clausewitz, "Deutsche Militaer Verfassung," as quoted by Hahlweg in Clausewitz, *Vom Kriege* (Bonn: Duemmler, 1980), p. 70.

the credit for creating an American controversy over limited war which involved Clausewitz and revealed a fault-line in the body politic. There emerged a rough correlation between on the one hand, adherents and opponents of the General Upton school of thought—when war starts, politics ends—and, on the other hand, the sunbelt and snowbelt regions of the United States. The sunbelt had a certain propensity to come down on the side of Upton, while the snowbelt tended to oppose him. This was no dance of disembodied concepts. Ever since the first days of aviation, California has been the stronghold of airmindedness. Then in World War II, many USAAF flying training bases were added where there was the most good flying weather year around; namely in Texas, where “the stars at night are big and bright,” and in many other sunbelt states. The important naval, commercial and missionary aspects of this region’s Pacific orientation, second only to its Latin-American sensitivities, go back too far and are too well known, to need recounting. The inconclusive nature of post-World War II American strategic planning for the Far East is the only immediately relevant background.³ Given the facts of Chinese manpower, a Korean and/or Chinese war was unlikely to be the preferred contingency of the US Army. War in Asia, if it was to be fought at all, would instantly prompt strong American demands for strategic “labor-saving” devices launched from platforms naval and aerial. Also the deep, inarticulate, but explosive cultural dimension must be kept in mind:

Felix Gilbert argued persuasively in *To the Farewell Address, Ideas of Early American Foreign Policy* (1961) that one-half of our national character—the commercial, trading, practical, compromising, internationalist half—has from the beginning of our history conflicted with the theological, Utopian, and isolationist half. The first persists, for example, in the internationalist Republicans of the East Coast. The isolationist tradition considers our involvement in international conflict and tension neither desirable nor permanent, but avoidable. It pursues a “realm of freedom” from war. It has no use for limited war.⁴

³See the excellent article by Roger Dingman, “Strategic Planning and the Policy Process: American Plans for War in East Asia, 1945-1950,” *Naval War College Review* vol. XXXII (November-December 1979), pp. 4-21, esp. 17. For the general theory of coercive diplomacy, see Wallace J. Thies, *When Governments Collide: coercion and diplomacy in the Vietnam conflict, 1964-1968* (University of California Press, 1980). Thies’ work, despite its subtitle, is no mere case study. It represents, rather, the latest chapter in the discussion of the concept of gradual escalation which is as ancient as King Archidamus of Sparta (see Thucydides, *Peloponnesian War*, 1:6).

⁴John E. Tashjian, *The Drift of Civil Defense* (Washington, DC: Institute for Defense Analyses, 1964), p. 4.

When the dust settled on America's Korean controversies and on a Truman administration hapless enough to have had to preside over the beginning balance of terror, philosophy did what Hegel says is all it can do: it articulated the real in rational language. The mainstream of American political science produced and applauded new notions of limited war. Precisely here Clausewitz fit in very nicely: not, of course, the real or whole Clausewitz in all his inimitable complexity but the convenient Clausewitz of *la formule* (as Aron calls it) about war being the continuation of politics with (not by) other means.⁷ The *locus classicus* is found in Osgood's *Limited War* of 1957. Referring to General MacArthur, Osgood wrote that:

despite the General's affirmations of limited ends and limited means, he was, in fact, motivated by a conception of war that was antithetical to all such limits. Whereas the administration, *implicitly operating upon the basis of Clausewitz' conception of war*, imposed definite restraints upon the military effort in the light of superior political considerations, MacArthur was temperamentally incapable of tolerating these restraints if they conflicted with his single-minded determination to meet force with "maximum counterforce" in order to secure a clear-cut military victory. The administration entered, fought and ended the Korean war for political objectives which took precedence, in its mind, over the conduct of battle; but MacArthur, from first to last, regarded the whole purpose of war as "destroying the enemy's military power and bringing the conflict to a decisive close in the minimum of time and with a minimum of loss." Any deviation from that indispensable military objective for political reasons constituted "appeasement" in his mind. Far from accepting the primacy of politics, he fervently believed, as he stated in his testimony, that "the minute you reach the killing stage," politics has failed, "and the military takes over."⁸

Thus Clausewitz began his career on the American stage as an authority figure of great intellectual respectability, yet playing to

⁷On this crucial point of *Clausewitzphilologie*, see James E. King, "On Clausewitz: Master Theorist of War," *Naval War College Review*, XXX (Fall 1977), p. 30f. The whole essay is a notable contribution.

⁸Robert E. Osgood, *Limited War* (University of Chicago, 1957), p. 176f.; author's italics. Possibly "General MacArthur, dizzy with success at his first swift victories, had a program of his own, a vast dream of reversing the verdict in China and rolling back the tide of world Communism from East to West." Michael Foot, *Aneurin Bevan* (London: Davis-Poynter, 1973), vol. II, p. 303. "With the Chinese intervention we were caught on the horns of a dilemma. We could not defeat the Chinese armed forces without carrying the war to China itself. This ran the risk not only of a land war in Asia against a numerically superior force, but also ran the risk of bringing in China's then ally the Soviet Union and expanding the war into Europe." Col. Harry G. Summers, USA, *On Strategy* (Carlisle Barracks: US Army War College, 1981), p. 36.

half a house. The absent half never entered from the right an American Ludendorff bold enough to break with the classic interpretation of the Clausewitzian formula, as the real Ludendorff had when he argued that as international politics becomes extreme or bellicist, the formula becomes tautologous.⁹ In any case, as the United States and its ally had kept Seoul and most of the real estate, any hypothetical American Ludendorff would have found his appeal weakened: there was no sting of clear and major defeat to prod the national psyche.¹⁰ A draw seemed surprising after the World War II era of unconditional surrender—surprising but not intolerable. MacArthur had, after all, demonstrated his brilliance to all the world at Inchon. Before the Congress he gave voice to the Uptonian attitude that “war’s very object is victory, not prolonged indecision.” Few sentiments, one suspects, would have earned a quicker condemnation by Clausewitz for dogmatism. The entire episode echoes down the decades past Vietnam: see the references to it in the Clausewitzian critique of America’s Vietnam strategy by Colonel Harry Summers.¹¹

All in all, then, the Korean war underlined four harbingers of the future. However awkwardly and precariously, a bilateral strategic balance had been put in place. Secondly, there had been a very vivid lesson confirming that mucking about near the border of China could be not only exceedingly slow, messy and inconclusive, but might risk escalation to nuclear levels involving the Sino-Soviet bloc. Third, the PRC established itself as a natural pivot for “horizontal” or inter-regional escalation: Korea, China and Vietnam emerged as *one* strategic region for no sooner did the Korean War wind down than PRC support of North Vietnam increased substantially.¹² Finally, Clausewitz had been “naturalized” in America as the ideological symbol of an establishment consensus which defeated sunbelt Uptonianism.

⁹See *inter alia*, the section about Schmitt in Aron, vol. II, chapter 5, section 4 (pp. 210-222); Erich Ludendorff in Dill, pp. 511-519 and, in the same volume, Hans-Ulrich Wehler, “‘Absoluter’ und ‘Totaler’ Krieg. Von Clausewitz zu Ludendorff,” at pp. 474-510.

¹⁰In August 1945, Colonels Dean Rusk and C. Bonesteel at the War Department recommended the 38th parallel as a demarcation line between American and Russian forces for receiving the Japanese surrender in Korea, not without an eye to putting the capital at Seoul into the American zone. William M. Carpenter, “The Korean War: A Strategic Perspective Thirty Years Later,” *Comparative Strategy*, vol. 2 (1980), p. 336.

¹¹Summers, *op. cit.*, *supra* in n. 8, *passim*.

II

The problems of limited conventional war thus raised in the fifties were overshadowed by the nuclear problem which emerged in the same decade and has been with us in increasingly acute forms ever since. For a full understanding, one must look before and after.

The end of World War II had brought with it, especially in the northern hemisphere exclusive of the Far East, a running start for nuclear weapons. This momentum had first developed due to the Manhattan Project. "Roosevelt started the program because he was 'convinced that Nazi scientists were engaged in a similar effort. He continued the program *after it became clear that Germany had abandoned its research.*'"¹³ At their Hyde Park meeting in September 1944, Roosevelt and Churchill formed a long-term Anglo-American nuclear special relation both military and commercial in nature.¹⁴ The fly in the ointment was that "as early as 1943 the President and members of the Top Policy Group received reports from the security section of the Manhattan Project, US Army Intelligence, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation indicating that an active communist cell existed in the Radiation Laboratory at the University of California. These reports noted that at least one scientist at Berkeley was selling information to Russian agents."¹⁵ Yet the course was set; bureaucratic momentum soon followed. A reeling Japan was "perceived" as a formidable redoubt justifying reduction by nuclear area bombing. The nature and failure of the Baruch-Lilienthal proposals of 1946 made public the depth of the gulf which had opened up between Moscow and Washington.¹⁶ Even so,

¹³In the spring of 1954 the US Army Chief of Staff was General Ridgway and his Chief of Plans and Operations was Lieutenant General James M. Gavin. Gavin wrote that "the more we studied the situation [of the French in Vietnam] the more we realized that we were, in fact, considering going to war with China....If we would be, in fact, fighting China, then...the Chinese would very likely reopen the fighting in Korea." Summers, p. 62f. In this connection one recalls that in the spring of 1968, when Vietnam was in crisis, the *Pueblo* incident off Korea strained American capabilities.

¹⁴Donald M. Snow, *Nuclear Strategy in a Dynamic World* (University of Alabama Press, 1981), p. 49; Snow's italics. He quotes Samuel F. Wells, Jr., "America and the 'MAD' World," *Wilson Quarterly*, vol. 1 (Autumn 1977), p. 58.

¹⁵Martin J. Sherwin, *A World Destroyed, the Atomic Bomb and the Grand Alliance* (New York: Knopf, 1975) pp. 108-114.

¹⁶Sherwin, *op. cit.*, p. 102f.

¹⁷See Peter Pringle and James Spigelman, *The Nuclear Barons* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, 1981), p. 45f.

“one of the most traumatic moments of the Cold War for members of the Harry S Truman administration came with Russia’s first test of an atomic weapon in the late summer of 1949. Though subsequent efforts were made to belittle its importance, the news of the Soviet bomb came as a shock to the administration, which complacently expected America’s nuclear monopoly to endure as long as a generation beyond Hiroshima.”¹⁷ The consequences of this shock included the famous strategic document, NSC-68.¹⁸ In a word, massive Soviet-American nuclear suspicion and rivalry began early in, and deepened throughout, the forties. The Korean War and America’s seizing of the occasion to build up NATO merely set the seal on the process.

Looking forward from the fifties, the Suez fiasco of 1956 gave impetus, if such were needed, to the French aspiration for strategic independence which came into full power with de Gaulle in 1958. The strains in Moscow-Peking relations and the course of the Paris-Peking entente remain at least partly shrouded in mystery; but clearly the Sino-Soviet Friendship Pact of 1950, negotiated so laboriously between Stalin and Mao, was failing and nuclear proliferation was to be expected from “second-tier” powers.¹⁹ Following on Washington’s fiasco with a Multilateral Force for NATO, China’s first thermonuclear explosion in October 1964 came two days after the deposition of Khrushchev.

That conjunction of bipolar strategic stability with incipient proliferation wrote the continuing counterpoint to the Ludendorff line. What became of the Clausewitzian formula if not politics but war became extreme? “There developed an appreciation—particularly after a notable war game, Carte Blanche, in 1955—that the use of nuclear weapons tactically would lead to very heavy damage to civilians and property in Europe. With this, and the growth in Soviet strategic weapons capabilities—development of both thermonuclear weapons and intercontinental delivery systems—interest in both Europe and the United States turned increasingly from ‘war fighting’ to deterrence of war.”²⁰ Was

¹⁷Gregg Herken, “‘A Most Deadly Illusion’: The Atomic Secret and American Nuclear Weapons Policy, 1945-1950,” *Pacific Historical Review*, vol. XLIX (February 1980), p. 51.

¹⁸Alan Wolfe, *America’s Impasse, the Rise and Fall of the politics of Growth* (New York: Pantheon, 1980), p. 115f.

¹⁹Pringle and Spigelman, *op. cit.*, pp. 204-210, throw light on Sino-Soviet strains in the PRC nuclear program.

²⁰George W. Rathjens, “Nuclear War Between the Superpowers,” in *The Dangers of Nuclear War*, ed. Franklyn Griffiths and John C. Polanyi (University of Toronto, 1979), p. 136f.

nuclear war in the heartland of white humanity not intolerable? In short, had the formula not been made obsolete by the nuclear hypertrophy of war?

Current West German policy, like Aron's *Penser la guerre, Clausewitz* (1976) has its roots in that situation. A recent overview of policy by West German Defense Minister Apel begins with the forthright comment that, due to the escalation potential of war to nuclear and global levels, the maintenance of peace is now an overriding objective of national policy in a sense quite alien to Clausewitzian times and circumstances. The vocation of the soldier has acquired a profoundly humane purpose inasmuch as military power can serve only to prevent war and secure peace. Nuclear and conventional capabilities jointly constitute means of deterrence, opening the door to the defusing of international friction. Detente cannot eliminate conflict between states with different social systems, but can remove the danger in such conflicts. Thus, in a reversal of Clausewitz, *conflict is continued without an admixture of military means*.²¹

An attentive reading of these remarks will highlight the contrast to some American views in the deterrence-only concept of military force and the continuing adherence to detente as the necessary counterpart to deterrence, using the time bought by deterrence. These strains within NATO are asymmetric inasmuch as the German or European perception is better rooted in fundamental statecraft than the exclusively military ideology of limited strategic war, so long the darling of the Defense Nuclear Agency.

All this, however, is to anticipate. Aron's massive work, growing out of lectures begun around 1971, now approaches an English edition. Perhaps Aron will, in his English edition or subsequently, take up the provocative new topics which limited strategic war and decapitation options present to Clausewitzians. Decapitation, or nuclear attack on command authorities, seems to carry implications of nation-splitting, anarchism, and feudalism so strong as to be incompatible with the Clausewitzian devotion to the nation-state as the characteristic achievement of modernity. For, as Steinbruner remarks in passing, "pre-emptive attack on...command structure...would preclude a bargained end of war."²²

²¹Hans Apel, "Vom Kriege—Vom Frieden. Zur Sicherheitspolitik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland," Clausewitzgesellschaft, ed., *Freiheit ohne Krieg?*, *op. cit.*, n. 2 *supra*; author's italics.

²²John D. Steinbruner, "Nuclear Decapitation," *Foreign Policy*, no. 45 (Winter 1981-82), p. 19.

With or without a treatment of such topics, Aron's book will remain a major contribution to Clausewitzian studies. Coming from the pen of a recognized student of international relations, these eight hundred pages have earned significant reviews which it would be tedious to summarize or criticize.²³ A few facts will indicate the scope of the work. The initial chapters cover the life and intellectual development of Clausewitz, a much-disputed subject bearing heavily on his concept of war. There follow a good hundred pages on dialectical aspects of war: this is the domain of dichotomies or at least polarities such as means and ends, moral and physical factors, attack and defense. Volume I then concludes with four chapters on the theoretical revolution intended by Clausewitz, whom Aron likens to Montesquieu without necessarily asserting a link by influence. Here the author would caution that the position of Clausewitz between Kant, Hegel and Fichte has yet to be examined in a comprehensive way.²⁴

Volume II covers the century past from Bismarck down to the present, as indicated earlier. The mode of discourse is not anything as simple as a hunt for the influence of Clausewitz, but a discussion of major politico-military subjects from the point of view of international-relations realism (French Atlanticist or, at any rate, anti-Gaullist version) informed by Clausewitzian considerations. That, however, does not get us very far. Reviewing another work of Aron's, *Politics and History* (1978), Professor Gilbert writes that

the determining formative influence on Aron's mind was a long stay in Germany in the last years of the Weimar Republic. The German approach to the philosophy of history...and the impact of Max Weber's sociology have remained basic elements of Aron's thought...Aron places in the center of his theory the fact that among nations, violence is considered normal....This assumption...eliminates the Utopianism to which writers in the field of international relations are prone....Aron's concern with power was—almost necessarily—accompanied by an interest in military affairs and military thinking. Aron is well known as a student of Clausewitz.²⁵

It is no secret that international-relations realism is a realism *sui*

²³See Hans-Joachim Arndt, "Bleiben die Staaten die Herren der Kriege?" *Der Staat*, Vol. 16 (1977), pp. 229-238; W. B. Gallie, "Clausewitz Today," *European Journal of Sociology*, vol. XIX (1978), pp. 143-167; Michael Howard, "The Military Philosopher," *Times Lit. Supplement* (June 25, 1976), p. 754f.; Peter Paret in *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, vol. VIII (Autumn 1977), pp. 369-372; and E. Rosenbaum as in note 3, *supra*.

²⁴See, *inter alia*, Schmitt in Dill, p. 435ff. We have been unable to consult P. Creuzinger, *Hegels Einfluss auf Clausewitz* (1911). See the discussion of this work in Aron, vol. I, chapter IX, section 3 (pp. 360-371).

²⁵F. Gilbert in *Journal of Modern History*, vol. 52 (March 1980), p. 107f.

generis, strongly polemical in nature and largely innocent of philosophy of science, epistemology, and multidisciplinary depth. The compensating virtues which Aron brings to his text are great diligence of research and a Parisian intellectual's subtlety of discourse. The references to French circumstances, both political and personal, may seem obtrusive but are instructive in diverse ways.

Our criticism, *applying equally to all other Clausewitzian literature*, is to note the total absence of illumination by anthropology, both empirical and philosophical. The last word of Clausewitz on war, at the end of his very first chapter, is that

its dominant tendencies always make war a remarkable trinity—composed of primordial violence, hatred, and enmity—which are to be regarded as a blind natural force; of the play of chance and probability within which the creative spirit is free to roam; and of its element of subordination, as an instrument of policy, which makes it subject to reason alone.

The first of these three aspects mainly concerns the people; the second the commander and his army; the third the government. The passions that are to be kindled in war must already be inherent in the people; the scope which the play of courage and talent will enjoy in the realm of probability and chance depends on the particular character of the commander and the army; but the political aims are the business of government alone.²⁶

Now here, very clearly, all the aforementioned dualisms fall away: tripartition has the last word on war. There leaps to the eye the obvious identity of this most authoritative definition with the conception of war inherent in the functional tripartition of estates in Indo-European (I-E) society, namely rulers, warriors and workers.²⁷ No such definition of war will be found in Sun-tzu or Mao Tse-tung. In the very city and decade which saw the writing of this *staendische* Clausewitzian definition of war, Hegel's public lectures on the philosophy of history dealt with the Indian version of tripartition. What is more important, Hegel's lectures on *Rechtsphilosophie* propounded a Christian version of I-E tripartition. Elsewhere the author has noted the similarity between Hegelian and Clausewitzian notions of public international law in the matter of *jus ad bellum*, which also involves estate-specific conceptions of war.²⁸ For the contemporary study of I-E

²⁶Clausewitz, *On War* (1976), p. 89.

²⁷For an introduction to Indo-European studies and their bearing on the social sciences, see the author's "Indo-European Studies and the Sciences of Man," *History of Political Thought*, vol. II, issue 3 (November 1981, pp. 447-467).

²⁸John E. Tashjean, "Pious Arms: Clausewitz and the Right of War," *Military Affairs* (April 1980), p. 83, n. 12.

tripartition, substantially different from that of Hegel, the reader is referred to the writings of Georges Dumézil, including his *Destiny of the Warrior* (1970), and the definitive introduction to Dumézil, C. Scott Littleton's *New Comparative Mythology* (third edition, 1982).

Philosophical anthropology, however, goes well beyond this, concentrating on the estate of warriors, their typical mode of perception, and its interaction with the international system:

It follows from Hegel's view that war exists not because nations reach an impasse in their relations with each other; war exists because armies exist. The military exists because the warrior is a human type and the warrior is a human type because the act of self-sacrifice, of meeting force with force on behalf of an ideal, is one of the ways men apprehend themselves as free agents. The genuine threat to peace is not that diplomatic relations will break down and the technical problems of such negotiations will be taken up in the physical conflict of war. The genuine threat to peace is the fact that the warrior is a type of life. Wars are the result of the frustrations that peace brings to the warrior in his drive to act out the freedom of his own being. When such frustrations are sufficiently felt by the warriors of two nations, the actual conditions for war are met and the technical, diplomatic justification will soon be found.²⁹

About the year 1976 in which Aron's book was published, major biographies of Clausewitz appeared on both sides of the Atlantic; also the Howard-Paret translation of *Vom Kriege* finally raised English-speaking readers above the textual atrocities committed in decades past by Colonels Graham and Maude, and in the heat of Vietnam protest by Professor Rapoport (Pelican, 1968). The Howard-Paret edition would be enough, by itself, to justify the Princeton Clausewitz project begun in the middle sixties. A paperback edition of this translation of *On War* is expected in a few years, incorporating some emendations and, one hopes, a subject index. To the "political" naturalization of Clausewitz effected by Korean controversies, one can now add his "intellectual" naturalization among a wider American and English-speaking readership. In recent years, Clausewitz has been the subject of regular courses at the National Defense University (Washington) and the three senior service schools. General Furlong argues that he is relevant even to the aerospace age.³⁰

²⁹Donald P. Verene, "Hegel's Account of War," *Hegel's Political Philosophy*, ed. Z. A. Pelczynski (Cambridge University Press, 1971), p. 178.

³⁰Raymond B. Furlong, "The Validity of Clausewitz' Judgments for the Sphere of Air and Space War," *Clausewitzgesellschaft, Freiheit ohne Krieg, op. cit.*, pp. 221-228.

Paret's excellent biography, *Clausewitz and the State*, has come in for well-deserved praise. In its emphasis on Clausewitz as a political figure rather than an exclusively military writer, Paret's work continues and greatly deepens a line of interpretation first begun by Hans Rothfels some sixty years ago. Wounded in 1916, this student of history was directed by his mentor, the famous Meinecke, to Clausewitz as a doctoral topic. As Niemeyer rightly remarks, the topic was doubly recommended not only by the problematic relation of politics to war in Germany, but also by Meinecke's book of 1907, *Weltbuergerium und Nationalstaat*.³¹ And indeed the *problematique* formulated by Meinecke pervades Rothfels as much as Paret. A searching comparison of Paret's biography with that of Ritter von Schramm (*Clausewitz*, second edition, 1977) has been made by a former naval officer, Professor Arndt, who concludes with a reference to the naval lacuna in Clausewitz.³² This line of criticism he then elaborated quite powerfully in 1980.³³

To future biographers of Clausewitz one may recommend more attention to the importance of Scharnhorst. His importance is not merely that of mentor and patron. An understanding of Scharnhorst greatly illuminates our reading of Clausewitz. For whatever reasons, many matters are put so abstractly in the writings and papers of Clausewitz as to seem obscure. If you compare what Scharnhorst says on the same subject, it is often easy to "decode" the meaning of Clausewitz with considerable confidence.³⁴

III

If the spate of Clausewitziana published around 1976 was a

³¹See Friedrich Meinecke, *Cosmopolitanism and the National State* (Princeton University Press, 1970). For the remarks of Joachim Niemeyer on Rothfels, see Hans Rothfels, *Carl von Clausewitz* (Bonn: Duemmler, 1980 reprint of the 1920 edition with an epilogue by Niemeyer.)

³²H. J. Arndt, "Clausewitz aus der Sicht eines Deutschen und eines Amerikaners," *Der Staat*, vol. 17 (1978), pp. 434-438.

³³Arndt in *Freiheit ohne Krieg*, *op. cit.*, pp. 203-217.

³⁴See Reinhard Hoehn, *Scharnhorsts Vermaechtnis* (Bonn: Athenaeum, 1952), the second edition of which we have not seen. Dr. Niemeyer kindly drew the author's attention to Paret's strictures on Hoehn (in his *Yorck and the Era of Prussian Reform*, 1966, p. 283f.). These strictures must be noted but do not preclude the point here made about the hermeneutic uses of Scharnhorst for the student of Clausewitz.

fortuitous phenomenon, a similar event in 1980 was entirely predictable. On the occasion of the bicentennial of the birth of Clausewitz in 1780, three major German publications advanced Clausewitzian studies with respect to history and contemporary strategy.

Professor Hahlweg published a jubilee edition, the nineteenth, of *Vom Kriege*, which was reviewed in the *Journal of Strategic Studies* (June 1981). Barring major surprises in the twentieth edition, this jubilee edition may remain the preferred German edition for its wealth of scholarly apparatus.

About the same time, the Clausewitzgesellschaft published the papers of an international symposium devoted to historical and policy-oriented Clausewitzian studies.³⁵ This volume, it should be noted, was not restricted to contributions from or about NATO countries: it also included contributions from or about the Warsaw Pact countries as well as Japan. For anyone interested in the contemporary strategic utility of Clausewitz, the volume is indispensable. In recommending this volume to students of strategy, a cautionary note is necessary to prevent misplaced expectations. The volume, one should bear in mind, is sponsored by the Clausewitzgesellschaft, whose accents fall on the higher-level *coup d'oeil* and on fundamental processes rather than on current detail. Dogmatism is anathema; total technocratic preplanning of operations is resisted.

Thirdly, the jubilee of 1980 saw the publication of the first international anthology of comment on Clausewitz. Entitled *Clausewitz in Perspektive*, this massive paperback will be irresistible to serious students of the subject.³⁶ The publisher has, very shrewdly, issued a companion paperback edition of *Vom Kriege*, the pages of which are cited and quoted in the anthology. This compilation is, in effect, a massive and prolonged symposium featuring major participants such as General Ludwig Beck, Benedetto Croce, Che Guevara, Liddell Hart, Ludendorff and Professors Osgood, Paret, Rapoport, Ritter, Rothfels, Schmitt and Vagts. Although most of their contributions are in print elsewhere, it is a great convenience to have them brought together. G. Dill has provided an introduction on the historical and conceptual premises of Clausewitz, the relations between politics and war, and people's war during and since the Prussian resistance to Napoleon. Given

³⁵Clausewitzgesellschaft, ed., *Freiheit ohne Krieg?* (Bonn: Duemmler, 1980), p. 412; see the author's review in *Strategic Review*, (Summer 1981), p. 73ff.

³⁶See note 2, *supra*.

Dill's knowledgeable but critical stance towards Marxism, the last of his topics leads him into a survey of people's war from Lenin to the contemporary Sino-Soviet dialectic. The core of the book consists of sections on the modern evolution of armies, the Napoleonic era, essential aspects of Clausewitz, the important distinction between "absolute" and "total" war, Marxist perspectives on Clausewitz, people's war, and war in the nuclear age. All in all, this compendium is a good measure of opinion on Clausewitz in the middle decades of our century; it emphasizes social and political aspects rather than the strategic and military. The volume is, of course, far from exhaustive: Hahlweg's bibliography in the jubilee edition lists dozens of important recent studies which would justify another anthology.

IV

The Vietnamese Communist victories of 1954 and 1975 were attained by adaptations of strategies essentially Maoist in nature.³⁷ Western digesting of this experience has been fitful and selective. Two works published in 1981 are particularly noteworthy: by their pronounced divergence as to the bearing of Clausewitz on protracted revolutionary war, they provide yet another illustration of the flexible inclusiveness of his basic ideas. One author relates the Maoist model of strategy to Clausewitzian fundamentals, the other analyzes the outcome of the second Indochina war in Clausewitzian terms. The former is an English expert, the latter an American Army officer who is a designated strategist.

In *Social Order and the General Theory of Strategy*, Dr. Alexander Atkinson has done something very original and full of contemporary significance.³⁸ Everyone else relates contemporary guerrilla war to Clausewitz, if they do so at all, only by reference to his discussion of "little war" in Book VI:26. Atkinson, however, connects guerrilla war firmly to the political part of the famous formula and provides an alternative to the Soviet critique of the Clausewitzian concept of the state and politics. So he opens the door to a thoroughly revisionist model of strategy: society as a whole, rather than its armed forces, is the center of gravity and embodiment of the will to resist. The quest for a decisive battle

³⁷See the published and forthcoming writings of William Duiker and William Turley.

³⁸Alexander Atkinson, *Social Order and the General Theory of Strategy* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981).

between main forces is dethroned. Enthroned instead is guerrilla war, the invasion of a social order to capture the essentially insecure resources of the existing government and army.

This, however, overstates the scope of Atkinson's work somewhat. He is not concerned with guerrilla war as such; i.e., as a military technique of ancient origin and available at all points of the political spectrum. Atkinson's concern is only with what he calls "social war," a curious expression tautologous from the common sense and Clausewitzian points of view, since war is nothing if not social. Atkinson's unfortunate neologism really refers to revolutionary war, or civil war conjoint with a revolutionary campaign to capture state power. The historical paradigm is furnished by Chinese Communist politico-military strategy against Chiang Kai-shek's KMT up to 1949. This he evokes richly with newly translated material from the Ch'en Ch'eng collection of captured Chinese Communist documents. The chapters presenting this primary material will make Atkinson's book required reading for all students of Maoism. While the new material does not fundamentally upset existing views, it certainly deepens them and rounds them out.⁹ Atkinson emphasizes repeatedly that although land revolution was essential to the manipulation of motivation, future "social war" may not involve the land question. This would direct attention to mass mobilization *as a strategic subject*: much strategic forecasting may need to be broadened and deepened.

The book as a whole, then, offers an original thesis, and one on the important subject of the implications of the Maoist success for the fundamentals of strategy. The implications, Atkinson argues, are these: Clausewitzian theory must be reconstructed, expanded, and brought up-to-date from the ground up. Atkinson's *bête noire* is the Clausewitz condemned by Liddell Hart; his predecessor in time is Ludendorff, who also asked himself what happens to strategy when politics changes radically. Atkinson suggests that his philosophical patron saint is not Marx but Hobbes because of his notion of the war of all against all. Specialists in Hobbes will, perhaps, raise an eyebrow at this because that notion may not be meant as an empirical statement. With about equal justice one

⁹Atkinson does not cite, as he might have, Scott A. Boorman, *The Protracted Game, A Wei-ch'i Interpretation of Maoist Revolutionary Strategy* (Oxford University Press, 1969); Jeffrey Race, *War Comes to Long An* (U. of California Press, 1972); and the chapter by B. Whaley cited in note 2. The author has not seen Raymond F. Wylie, *The Emergence of Maoism* (Stanford U. Press, 1980).

could suggest that Atkinson's other philosophical patron saint is the Fichte who was a national revolutionary.⁴⁰

In any case, the book is exceedingly topical: "Since 1945 it has only been in revolutionary conflicts, in China or Vietnam or Algeria or Angola, that we have seen that complete 'overthrow' of the enemy which Clausewitz defined as the objective in total war."⁴¹ These victories were predicted by an Austrian Clausewitzian, Theodor Koerner, half a century ago.⁴² Thus the Vietnamese experience, as much as the Maoist, finds entry into the mainstream of Western strategic theory. Equally important, reality-avoidance, political scapegoating, and strategic insanity are prevented at least in principle insofar as traumatically inexplicable guerrilla victories become intelligible in Clausewitzian terms.

Devotees of Clausewitz must, however, confront Atkinson's harsh judgments on the concept of absolute war. By their own reading of *On War*, they may decide whether Atkinson has not overstated his case. He neither cites, nor alludes to, the criticisms of Liddell Hart's reading of Clausewitz made by Aron and Howard.⁴³ The latter, referring to the early Clausewitzian passages on the primacy of moral force and the centrality of decisive battle, remarks that "their strident tones tended to eclipse the careful analysis which surrounded them, and led the young Liddell Hart, after an early and embarrassingly superficial reading of the text, to denounce Clausewitz as 'the Mahdi of Mass.'"⁴⁴ As Atkinson makes such a major point of the distinction between strategic theory and strategic ideology, he might ponder Aron's argument that indirect strategy, which underlies Liddell Hart's reading, appeals to and supposes an insular condition.⁴⁵ In any case, Atkinson's criticism will not come as a total surprise to anyone familiar with Professor Gallie's logical dissection of, and philosophical strictures on, *Vom Kriege*.⁴⁶

"This important work is one man's critical analysis of American

⁴⁰See Johann Gottlieb, *Fichte ueber den Begriff des wahrhaften Krieges in Bezug auf den Krieg im Jahre 1813* (Tuebingen: Cotta, 1815), reprinted without editorial attribution (Leipzig: Felix Meiner, 1914), for a copy of which the author is much indebted to E. A. Nohn.

⁴¹Michael Howard, "The Military Philosopher," *Times Lit. Supplement*, June 25, 1976, p. 755.

⁴²M. F. Kitchen, "Paramilitarism and Social Democracy: Theodor Koerner and the Schutzbund," *Germany in the Age of Total War*, ed. Volker R. Berghahn and Martin Kitchen (1981), p. 185.

⁴³Aron, *Penser la guerre*, vol. II, pp. 289-297.

⁴⁴Howard as in note 41.

⁴⁵Aron, vol. II, p. 297.

⁴⁶W. B. Gallie, "Clausewitz Today," as in note 23.

strategy in the Vietnam war." So Lieutenant General DeWitt Smith, lately Commandant of the US Army War College, begins his foreword to the first paperback edition of Colonel Harry G. Summers' *On Strategy: The Vietnam War in Context*.⁴⁷ The book is indeed important not only for what it does but also for what it represents. It offers the first comprehensive critique of American strategy in Vietnam at the level of Clausewitzian concepts. Two major previous studies, General Dave Palmer's *Summons of the Trumpet* (1978) and the massive eight volumes by the BDM Corporation (*A Study of Strategic Lessons Learned in Vietnam*, 1979), were fairly comprehensive but certainly not Clausewitzian. An article by Colonel G. F. Freudenberg was Clausewitzian but not comprehensive.⁴⁸ Now Colonel Summers has filled this lacuna in a shrewd and impressive way; his work apparently represents the views of the current Army leadership on this sensitive subject. For historians of the influence of Clausewitz, Summers' book is indispensable. Representative Newt Gingrich of Georgia recently sent copies to each Senator and Representative. With slight modifications, the book appeared in a commercial version (*On Strategy: A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War*) from the Presidio Press in California in 1982.⁴⁹

Two kinds of controversy surround Atkinson and Summers. The first centers on their mutual bearing; the second involves the significance of Summers' work in the ongoing politics of American strategy. Neither controversy can be examined here; we merely raise some fundamental issues.

Atkinson's explanation of the Maoist success carries unmistakable overtones of its inevitability, for his concept of the insecurity of social resources is altogether apodictic. At the same time, KMT strategy vis-a-vis Mao is hardly mentioned, which suggests that it was utterly hopeless. The simultaneous Chinese

⁴⁷Colonel Harry G. Summers, USA, *On Strategy: The Vietnam War in Context* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: US Army War College, April 1981). US Government Printing Office no. 1981-707-532.

⁴⁸G. F. Freudenberg, "A Conversation with General Clausewitz," *Military Review* (October 1977), p. 68ff.

⁴⁹For these details and some stimulating conversation, the author is indebted to Colonel Summers, who also provided copies of the following reviews of *On Strategy*: General Andrew P. O'Meara, USA(Ret.) in *Armor* (November-December 1981), p. 59; General Bruce Palmer, USA(Ret.) in *Parameters*, vol. XI (December 1981), p. 90f.; Drew Middleton, "Colonel Cites Key Mistakes Over Vietnam," *New York Times*, February 7, 1982, p. 17 (and Summers' letter to the editor in reply thereto in *New York Times*, February 15, 1982).

Nationalist resistance against Japan is simply ignored. So it may be worth noting that as of January 1935, "on the Chinese side, 60-80 regiments were reserved, by order of Chiang Kai-shek, for internal pacification. That left 300 regiments for use against Japan."⁵⁰ The point made here is *not* that the KMT was always fighting Japan with all its power, or with the preponderance of its power. The point is simply that *neither* side in the Chinese civil war is intelligible without reference to the Japanese presence; on this point, Marshal Lin Piao's famous manifesto of 1965 is a better guide than Atkinson.⁵¹ The two models of strategy which Atkinson contrasts are, exactly like the model in Clausewitz, bilateral: but the Chinese struggle was a trilateral affair. Indeed some historians would argue that the years of war with Japan so fatally affected the KMT as to determine the eventual outcome in 1949. When the question of inevitability is raised with respect to Summers, one receives the following impression: however critical he is of American strategy or nonstrategy in Vietnam, he does suggest that another strategy—isolating the battlefield from the regular NVA—might well have succeeded. In other words, the victory of Hanoi was not inevitable.

One subject of most immediate interest to professional military people is involved in both works: as Atkinson puts it,

the one great obsession in the classical theory of strategy is the destruction or, in later forms, neutralization of the armed power of the opponent....The prime centre of the will to resist...came to rest on the armed forces of the opponent; the destruction or neutralization of which...being designated as the essential avenue to the political object....The main thread in classical thinking is...the notion that in...pursuit of the political object the will to resist in war is...primarily a function of the armed forces...compromise the latter and one invariably acts on the former. This obsession with armed power as the prime instrument of strategy and thus the main centre of the will to resist tends to direct reasoning towards quick classical solutions typified by "decisive battle."⁵²

On this important subject, unfortunately, no clear confrontation of views can be inferred because the scope and intent of the authors are largely incommensurable. Atkinson essentially contrasts two paradigms of strategic theory abstracted (heroically, as noted

⁵⁰Hsi-huey Liang, *The Sino-German Connection, Alexander von Falkenhausen between China and Germany, 1900-1941* (Amsterdam: Van Gorcum, 1978), p. 101.

⁵¹Lin Piao, 'Long Live the Victory of People's War!' *Peking Review* (September 3, 1965); reprinted in A. Doak Barnett, *China After Mao* (Princeton University Press, 1967), pp. 196-262.

⁵²Atkinson, pp. 2-3.

above about the Chinese civil war) from recent but overlapping eras. Summers' critique deals with a particularly intricate case of coalition warfare. Speaking of the situation after the battle of Ia Drang in November 1965, he writes

Now was the time for the United States to take the offensive. Although in theory the best route to victory would have been a strategic offensive against North Vietnam, such action was not in line with US strategic policy which called for the *containment* rather than the destruction of communist power....While a strategic offensive against North Vietnam may not have been politically feasible, we could have taken the tactical offensive to isolate the battlefield. But instead of orienting on North Vietnam—the source of the war—we turned our attention to the symptom—the guerrilla war in the south.”

An important difference seems to lurk here about the *duration* necessarily intended in any strategic objective and in any military strategy. Atkinson's lens is opened much wider to take in the premilitary tasks and years or decades of struggle of a revolutionary movement. He could not, on his view of things, concentrate his evaluation on the period after November 1965. Summers, in fact, provides some of the factual basis for a view Atkinson might take of the second Indochina war: this is a reconstruction, *not* an attribution. First and most generally, Summers quotes General Westmoreland's statement that “the Communists in Vietnam waged a classic revolutionary war.”³⁴ This, of course, would seem to imply political objectives *in Vietnam*. Summers corrects such dangerously false inference by quoting P. J. Honey's analysis *published in 1963*: “the clearest statement of the long-term objectives of the Lao Dong Party which has yet come to light is to be found in a secret party document captured by the French Expeditionary Corps in North Vietnam during the spring of 1952....The ultimate aim of the Vietnamese Communist leadership is to install Communist regimes in the whole of Vietnam, in Laos, and in Cambodia.”³⁵ There was a gross asymmetry of strategic objectives. An America trying to defend the problematic new nation of South Vietnam was swamped by the Hanoi leadership which was thinking big. Hence derives all the later tragicomedy about the Ho Chi Minh Trail and the secret bombing of Cambodia and the invasion of Laos. Having articulated its political goal with a strong concentration on the legitimacy of *South Vietnam*, America could not cope with a

³³Summers, pp. 55-56.

³⁴Summers, p. 48.

³⁵Summers, p. 61.

revolutionary movement free of such myopia. When the logistics battle moved, as a tug-of-war will, beyond the initial grounds in South Vietnam, the desperate improvisations of secret bombing and ground incursion collapsed before domestic constraint due to the geographic narrowness of the previously articulated goal. In a word, from the very beginning the long-term grand ambition of Hanoi went unmatched. Such are the joys of being on the strategic defensive.

Another issue of considerable interest is the bearing of the Chinese case on Vietnam, specifically on the second Indochina war. Atkinson is vague about the nexus between "his" war and Summers' war. His model seems general enough to include the latter case. Indeed, Atkinson's book is worth comparison with *Long Live the Victory of the People's War!* by Lin Piao: both works generalize from the Chinese case, but very differently. It may be that Summers' war can be essentially distinguished from the Chinese case: this remains an open and important question.

The most crucial issue is not examined by either author: *could* Chiang's KMT and the US in fact have had other strategies? "Having a strategy" does not mean getting the bright idea of one. It means laying the foundations well, designing it adequately, and carrying it out thoroughly. So the question about the KMT and the US raises no small matter. Here it is relevant to note some institutional aspects. Military history consists almost entirely of descriptions and explanations of what actually happened: hardly ever does it become critical history evaluating strategies pursued against strategies which might have been pursued. The individuals and organizations doing military history do not command, organizationally or intellectually, the resources needed to game and test hypothetical strategies in the context of actual ones.

As for the Chinese case so fundamental in many respects, the warnings about Maoist strategy sounded in America *in the late fifties* came from unprestigious universities and went unheeded. The mainstream mentality prematurely proclaiming "the end of ideology" doomed to failure any plea to take seriously Maoist writings on protracted war, let alone obscure Southeast Asian regional variations thereof. On any rational view of the matter, not the late fifties but *October 1, 1949* was the date no later than which the United States should have begun a ruthlessly comprehensive, objective, and politico-military study of the Maoist success and its future implications. Admittedly this would not have been easy in 1949. For example, referring to the Tsunyi Resolutions of 1935 so important in the evolution of Maoist strategy, Wilson notes that

their full text "first appeared in a Chinese edition of Mao Tse-tung's *Selected Works* published in 1948....But this edition did not circulate widely and only one copy of it is apparently known outside China or has been seen inside China by any foreign scholar. The document was omitted from all other editions of Mao's *Selected Works*."⁵⁶ It might not have been easy, but no one seems to have tried. The US made light of the Maoist politico-military model which Ho Chi-minh and others had been studying and adapting to Vietnam since the early forties. So the United States came to Vietnam like the amateur explorer short on knowledge and overloaded with equipment. Avoidable ignorance in great matters of state is immoral; the condign punishment was prompt enough.

These issues, and other related ones, raise us from the level of Clausewitzian concepts to the level of comparative statecraft and the quality of ruling classes.⁵⁷ As states are notoriously backward pupils, particular interest attaches to their attempts to practice what Hegel called "pragmatic history," the interferring of useful insight from experience. *The Military Phoenix from the Prussian Reform to post-Vietnam America* is a historical thriller yet to be written though the topic has been on our national agenda implicitly since the Tet Offensive of 1968 and explicitly since Colonel Corson's *Consequences of failure*.⁵⁸ For the autumn of 1982 the US Army has convoked a conference of historians on the consequences of failed campaigns. Immediately after the election of 1980 the New York intelligentsia started the journal *Democracy*, in which alarm is expressed about the campaign against the "Vietnam syndrome."⁵⁹ It would be tempting to see all this merely as the iceberg of which the recent unpleasantness between CBS and General Westmoreland was the visible tip. Perhaps it is not misplaced profundity to emphasize, instead, deeper and conceptual roots of the matter in the new and critical study of the American presidency. This school of thought, first and most notably exemplified by Franz Schurmann's *Logic of World Power* (1974),

⁵⁶Dick Wilson, *The Long March 1935* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1971), p. 91.

⁵⁷For Prussian statecraft as the background to Clausewitz, see Richard Dietrich, "Die Anfänge des preussischen Staatsgedankens in den politischen Testamenten der Hohenzollern," *Neue Forschungen zue Brandenburg-Preussischen Geschichte I*, eds. Fr. Benninghoven and C. Lowenthal-Hensel (Koeln: Bochlau, 1979), pp. 1-60. For political testaments and mirrors for princes in general, see the author's "On Theory of Statecraft," *Review of Politics*, vol. 35 (July 1973), pp. 375-385.

⁵⁸William R. Corson, *Consequences of Failure* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1974).

⁵⁹See in that journal, Walter LaFeber, "The Last War, the Next War, and the New Revisionists," January 1981, pp. 93-103; Frank A. Burdick, "Vietnam Revisioned: The Military Campaign Against Civilian Control," January 1982, pp. 36-52.

now includes the writings of Alan Wolfe on the same subject.⁶⁰ At this level of analysis, even the most indisputable lessons of Vietnam would be only a few of many determinants of perceived and preferred worlds, enemies, and strategies. Here, we emphasize, *the tripartite definition of war by Clausewitz has its peacetime and dynamic significance*, for even the most ideal President must take into account the interplay of government, army and people. *That definition bears not only on warfighting but also on basic national security policy.*

This much, at any rate, is clear: there is no comparison between America's post-Korean Clausewitz and our post-Vietnam Clausewitz. The latter is incomparably superior to the former in seriousness, reach, and depth. Atkinson's criticism of Clausewitz on absolute war appears to be entirely separable from, and independent of, his derivation of revolutionary strategy from the Clausewitzian political formula on war. In other words, even if everything Atkinson says about absolute war in Clausewitz is right, his expansion and universalization of Clausewitz remain valid. In this way the figure of Clausewitz is so enlarged as to become, for the first time in all history, the truly global personification of fundamental strategy.

⁶⁰See his book cited in note 18 and his "Presidential Power and the Crisis of Modernization," *Democracy* (April 1981), pp. 19-32.

THE CLAUSEWITZ PAPERS, VOLUME II:
A POSTSCRIPT

Even before the second volume of the Clausewitz papers appears in 1982 or 1983, some controversy has arisen over the position of Clausewitz in matters logical and epistemological. The critiques of Professor Gallie and Dr. Atkinson have been touched on. Professor Hahlweg, in a private communication to the author dated March 22, 1982, refers to his chapter on philosophy and theory in the Clausewitz *Festschrift* (see note 35 above, pp. 325-332). These pages describe and interpret the Clausewitzian texts of 1809-1812 which will appear in Volume II. Hahlweg emphasizes the Kantian influence of Kiesewetter and the contemporary importance of philosophy in mitigating the superficialities of pragmatism and technocracy in matters military. Serious students of the philosophical side of Clausewitz must also consider the realist phenomenology and quasi-Hegelian logic discussed by Robert Hepp, "Der harmlose Clausewitz (II)," *Zeitschrift fuer Politik*, volume 25 (1978) pp. 390-429, esp. p. 398ff.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

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